

GERMAN PRISONERS
BRINGING LIFE TO
WAR TORN REGIONS
Searching French Fields for
Duds They Fired
Months Ago
REFUGEES ARE BACK HOME

Cellars and Temporary Shacks as
Living Quarters Till Houses
Are Rebuilt

"First in war, first in peace" is an applicable motto to the Germans, although in a different sense, as to the first commander-in-chief of an American Army. And today thousands of their former warriors are pioneering in the work of converting the devastated battle areas from the North Sea to the Swiss border into a semblance of the peaceful aspect they presented in 1911.

So rapidly are man and nature effacing the signs of conflict that before the bars are lifted for the tourists of the world, the lines of the Western front in their entirety will remain only in the memories of those who participated in the big show. There will remain scars here and there, marked by monuments, and untouched ruins already designated as monuments of the war. But it will be possible to trace the lines as they stood at certain dates only on the map.

Wire and Trenches Go
Thousands of German prisoners of war, working under the direction of their American, French or English captors, have been at work since the signing of the armistice clearing up the ruins and wiping out the old defensive works. The roads are the first to receive their attention. The result is a veritable boulevard for hundreds of kilometers through the heart of what was once the Western front.

Hundreds of miles of trenches have been filled in by the Germans and thousands of miles of barbed wire entanglements have been removed. The farmers are adding here and there to expedite the work and prepare the land for the plow. In many places grain is growing on the fields which were within the lines less than six months ago. Among the main factors with which the peasants have to contend upon returning to till their soil are the dud shells and unexploded grenades which sometimes render the services of the farmers take matters into their own hands and start playing or spading. Occasionally the result is disastrous.

Near Vieux-Artois, where the Comité Américain des Régions Dévastées has its headquarters, death and serious injury have resulted from the work of the soldiers. One old man, but just returned from captivity in Germany, began spading his little plot of ground where his home once stood. He struck an unexploded "potato masher" and was killed.

The soldiers of this committee have been called on several similar cases. Cases have been reported where both farmer and horse have been killed by striking duds with a plow.

Made Homes in Ruins
Returning refugees are burrowing into the piles of ruins marking their former homes and settling up housekeeping again. Sometimes the cellar is cleaned out and converted into living quarters. If the walls of one room are partially intact, the family moves in, after a few tons of brick and debris have been tossed to one side.

When boards are obtainable a little spot is cleared and a one or two-room shanty erected for temporary shelter, pending the day when a better home can be built. Restaurants and cafes are scattered through the ruins. The signs are sometimes all that the proprietors advanced from the ruins of their former businesses. Passing refugees and soldiers stationed in or adjacent to the ruined villages are the customers.

It will require years to rebuild the greater part of the villages and cities which have been leveled. Work of sorting out the salvagable brick and stone and carting away the fragments is being pushed, however. In Reims, where 17,000 buildings were destroyed by the German artillery, contractors are on the ground arranging for reconstruction work. Some of the wealthier citizens are said to have already let contracts, but the smaller property holders are awaiting the action of the Government in regard to financial aid.

Leans and Ypres also offer serious problems. The former was leveled by artillery, and later trenches and wire were built through the ruins. Here and there one sees a grave several feet above street level in the ruins of a house.

Monuments Spring Up

British detachments stationed in the vicinity of Vimy Ridge have erected several monuments to the memory of Canadian and Australian troops who fell there. Crews working under the direction of a burial officer are gathering the bodies from the spots where they were hastily buried on the battle fields and in cemeteries that now dot the ridge and plain. All material of salubrious nature has been gathered and arranged in neat piles, wire is being removed, and the elements have prevented the hand of man in commencing to efface the trench systems.

DON'TS FOR OFFICERS

Emergency officers who want to know just how they stand with the Army are given a line in a bulletin issued by the Secretary of War.

Reviewing the fact that emergency officers were classified at the beginning of demobilization according to their desires and suitability for future service, the bulletin indicates clearly that those who have expressed a wish to remain in service must expect a doubtful present status until legislation is passed providing for a permanent establishment. These officers will be the last discharged.

Then follows the list of Don'ts:

Don't have letters forwarded to the War Department respecting your fitness unless such letters are of real value in determining that fitness.

Don't expect an appointment in the permanent establishment just because you are in Class 3.

Don't expect immediate promotion, as it is not known what the present method of commissioning will be continued.

Don't expect to remain in Class 3, for some one will have to be discharged if there is a surplus in the establishment provided.

Due to this uncertainty as to future legislation, no maximum age limit has been set for applicants for appointment in the permanent establishment, and this appointment again is subject to their eligibility under such legislation as may be enacted.

MESSKIT MAXIMS

One advantage of being a brigadier general is that you don't have to register with the A.E.N. Another advantage is your pay. But who in the world will shoot craps with you!

Things we hear of but never see:

A satisfied private.

A soldier retelling on his income.

A general attempting to compliment a soldier on his military bearing.

Spiral puttees that will not come down.

A worse war than this one.

GREEN DIVISIONS PROVED THEIR METTLE IN THE SECOND ARMY'S DRIVE

Continued from Page 1

Second American Army would carry its attack northward toward Conflans; the Tenth French Army would move north and east toward the Saar and the Moselle. Both would avoid direct attack upon Metz, which would be isolated and captured between them. As regards the remainder of the German line in Alsace between the right of the Tenth Army and the Swiss frontier, that would similarly have to fall back, the Rhine because of being outflanked.

German Divisions Outnumbered

Such was the broad general idea of an operation, or series of operations, which, had the war continued, would undoubtedly have achieved full success before the setting in of hard winter weather. That it would have achieved success is sufficiently evident from the general situation at the close of hostilities. On November 16 the Germans had on their whole front from the vicinity of Fribourg to the Swiss border about 25 divisions, of which two only were in reserve and the balance in line. These divisions, most of them, were of inferior quality at best, and were of new in a very low state of morale and tremendously reduced in numbers. Moreover, the German high command had no troops whatever that could be spared from the other crumbling fronts with which it was struggling.

On the same front the Allies had 25 French and American divisions, of which 18 were in line and 7 in reserve. These divisions were all intrinsically of quality from fair to excellent, all were in high spirit and all were fairly well up to strength, in measure of numbers alone exceeding their opponents probably several times over. That once they were under way they would have carried everything before them there was no doubt whatever at the time of the signing of the armistice. But it is just as well to recall the blunt facts now, several months after the close of hostilities, when the Germans attempt to convey to the world the impression that when fighting ceased their armies were, in some mysterious sense, still "unbeaten." The plain truth is that on November 11 their armies were squarely in the path of an annihilating avalanche, and that it was the interposition of the armistice alone which saved them from an overthrow on the field of battle even more complete and overwhelming than that which had already overtaken the armies of her ally, Austria-Hungary.

The offensive of the Second American and the Tenth French Armies was to be inaugurated by an advance of four divisions in line and five in reserve along its front of 50 kilometers from Fribourg-en-Vosges to Port-sur-Saône. The latter place, situated about 10 kilometers east of the Moselle, the advance once started, the Tenth Army was, on November 11, to move forward its ten divisions, to be later augmented on November 16 with four divisions from Port-sur-Saône to Senones.

One important difference existed in the method of attack to be employed by the two armies. The Second American Army, in its first four divisions already in front line, whereas the Tenth French Army, under General Girard, which was already holding its front of action with six divisions. The latter would doubtless later have become available as reserves for the Tenth Army. The plans of the Tenth Army were not so complete at the time of the armistice as to make it precisely certain how many or what troops it was to employ beyond those already assembled within its zone of action, but it was understood that some of the American divisions and corps would be used in directly pressing its offensive, which, spreading out toward the Saar and the Rhine, would eventually have been of great magnitude.

As Front Stood November 8

Coming now specifically to the Second American Army, we find that on November 8 it was holding its front with four divisions, from right to left, the 2nd, 4th, 25th and 33rd. Between the left flank of the 33rd, at Fribourg, and the right of the 25th U.S. Division, which was on the offensive near Houtoumont, lay the 2nd Colonial Corps (French), the right corps of the First American Army, having in line the 81st, 82nd and 83rd U.S. Divisions, which were in the line with the 25th U.S. Division, besides the 85th U.S. Division, which could not be counted specifically as a reserve division because it was the replacement division for the Army. Three corps, the Fourth and Sixth U.S. and the Seventeenth French, were functioning under the Second Army, and though they would later have had more divisions under them, at the beginning of the operations the Sixth Corps had the 92nd and the 7th Divisions, while the Fourth Corps had only the 28th Division and the Seventeenth Corps only the 2nd Division.

Of the front line divisions, the 92nd held from Port-sur-Saône to a point south of Preney, about four kilometers west of the Moselle; the 7th from Preney to the east bank of the Rupt de Mad; the 25th from the Rupt de Mad across Lachausse Lake to about La Selvaillous brook, a short distance north of Houtoumont, and the 33rd from this brook to Fribourg. The greater part of this front, from the Moselle to Fribourg, was therefore that which had been occupied about September 15 after the ejection of the enemy from the St. Mihiel salient.

All Ready for Enemy Withdrawal

On November 1 Field Order No. 13 of the Second Army was issued as a standing order, to be put into execution in case of enemy withdrawal. With sufficient detail to cover the functioning of all services of the Army, it set forth the objectives of an advance and the means to be employed in attaining them. It stated that in that case the enemy would probably pivot upon Metz, holding the outer defenses, 10 or 15 kilometers from the center of the city, on the general line Amanviller-Ancy-sur-Moselle-Verny, and that the right corps of the First American Army would advance in the direction of Etain. It directed that the Seventeenth French, which was the 33rd Division, should advance toward Conflans; the Fourth Corps (that is, the 28th and 7th Divisions), toward Vionville and the Sixth Corps (that is, the 92nd Division), should stand fast, but maintain close contact with the enemy by means of strong reconnaissances.

An Field Order No. 13 was to become operative only in case of enemy withdrawal, naturally no "D" day could be specified. But on November 4 a commander-in-chief received from Marshal Foch directing that, in view of the withdrawal of the Austrian divisions from the enemy's front, consequent upon the signing of the armistice with Austria, the vigorous local operations should be begun along the front of the Second American Army to discover the enemy's intentions and the dispositions which he was making.

The Austrian armistice had, in fact, resulted in the withdrawal of the 1st and the CVIII Austrian Divisions from the front of the First American Army north of Verdun and of the XXXVth Austrian Division from the front of the Second American Army, opposite the 33rd Division. It may be imagined that the retirement of these allies did not exert an encouraging effect upon the adjacent German troops, who thus tangibly had notice served upon them that henceforth they would have to fight the war alone.

The instructions of the supreme command were followed on November 5 by a detailed order from the Commander-in-Chief of the American Armies, in the communication from the latter it was stated that the First and Second American Armies would at once prepare to undertake

operations with the ultimate purpose of destroying the enemy's organizations and driving him beyond the existing frontiers in the region of Briey and Lunewy. Preliminary to beginning this offensive, it was stated that the First American Army would complete the occupation of the region between the Meuse and the Bar and the ejection of the enemy from the heights of the Forest de Woivre, and that it would then conduct operations to drive him beyond the rivers Theinle and Chiers. The latter operation was to be begun at once by the establishment of a footing on the east bank of the Meuse in the region of Stenay and Mouzon.

Eyes Fixed on Briey

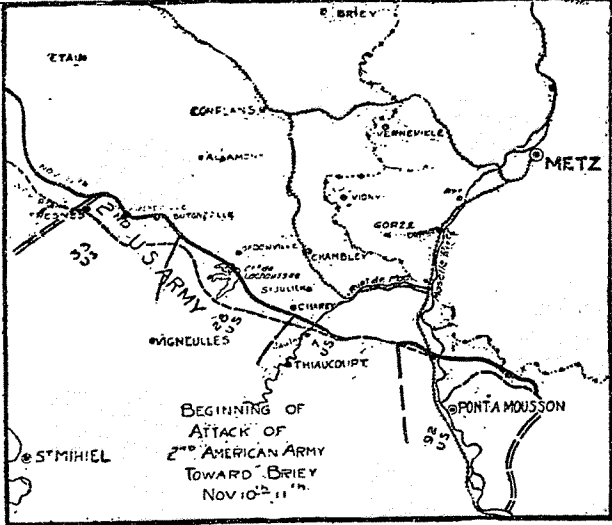
As has been seen already, all of the above objects up to the crossing of the Theinle had been successfully accomplished by November 11. On its part, the Second American Army was directed to conduct raids and local operations, advance its line

delivered on the morning of the 16th, with, moreover, a considerably greater front and the employment of larger forces than at first contemplated.

At this time the enemy's order of battle (opposite the Second Army was, from north to south; IIIrd Bavarian, XIIth Landwehr, XXIVth, LXVth Reserve, VII Landwehr, CCXXIVth and VIIIth Landwehr Divisions of General von Fuch's Army Detachment "C" of the Army Group of General von Gallwitz, and the CCIVth Division and the XXXIst and LXXXVth Landwehr Brigades of General von Both. The XXIXth Army of the Army Group of the Duke of Wurtemberg.

At 7 o'clock on the morning of the 16th, Maj. Gen. Charles C. Ballou, commanding the 92nd Division, had his 35th Infantry Regiment advance behind a rolling barrage into the re-entrant salient on the east side of the Moselle. The troops drove back the enemy's outpost line to depths varying from one and one-half to two and one-half kilometers, occupying the Bois Frehaut.

THE BATTLE OF THE WOEVRE



Where New Divisions in Second American Army Were Advancing When the Armistice Halted Their Onrush

between the Moselle and Lachausse Lake toward Gorze and Chambley, and prepare plans for an attack in the direction of Briey along the axis Fribourg-Conflans-Briey.

Detailed instructions for the Second Army operations were given by command of General Bullard on November 6. The initial advance, owing to the small number of troops as yet actually on the ground, was to be confined to two brigades, one each from the 28th and the 7th Divisions, which were to move through the hills country along the Rupt de Mad in the direction of Gorze and Chambley, but with, at first, only the limited objective of the Michel position of the Hindenburg line between the 7th and eastern edge of the Bois de Grand Fontaine. Owing to the necessity of concentrating the troops and sufficient artillery to cover the attack, the drive was first set for November 11, but the continued rapid withdrawal of the enemy on other parts of the front eventually dictated an earlier execution, and the attack was

near the river, and the Bois de Volvrette and the Bois de Cheminot, further east. The enemy's resistance, at first slight, increased later in the day, and about 4 o'clock in the afternoon the Bois de Volvrette was abandoned, but was again occupied at midnight. The attack here was repulsed at a cost of 11th against live artillery and machine gun opposition, and the 35th had advanced to the north edge of the Bois Frehaut at 11 o'clock, when the 35th was to move through the hills country along the Rupt de Mad in the direction of Gorze and Chambley, but with, at first, only the limited objective of the Michel position of the Hindenburg line between the 7th and eastern edge of the Bois de Grand Fontaine. Owing to the necessity of concentrating the troops and sufficient artillery to cover the attack, the drive was first set for November 11, but the continued rapid withdrawal of the enemy on other parts of the front eventually dictated an earlier execution, and the attack was

Attempt of Two Companies

The 7th Division, under Maj. Gen. Edmund Wittenmeyer, stood with the 56th, 55th, 64th and 24th Infantry in line from right to left, and the 6th Field Artillery

Brigade in support. Early on the morning of the 10th, strong patrols were pushed out from the front line battalions, and a little later two companies of the 56th Infantry attacked and occupied Preney ridge. But attempts to progress from here through the enemy's heavy belts of wire were shattered by machine gun and artillery fire, and before long the two companies were forced to leave the ridge, having lost about 40 per cent of their numbers.

Further to the west, however, the division met with better success, the 34th Infantry on its left taking and holding the stone quarry near Remercourt, in the hills just west of the Rupt de Mad. From here the attacking units pushed on to the German wire at Mon Plaisir Farm, within a kilometer of Charey. In the vicinity of these places 21 prisoners were taken, but the heavy fire from the farm prevented its capture by the limited numbers engaged, either on that day or the following morning.

The 25th Division, now under command of Maj. Gen. William H. Day, astride the southeastern extremity of Lachausse Lake, on the left of the Fourth Corps, began its operations with characteristic vigor at 5:30 on the morning of the 16th by driving its right against the Hindenburg works in front of Dommartin. Though prevented by intense artillery fire from reaching the village, the Bois de Dommartin and Maribois Farm, southwest of it, were captured. At 3:30 in the afternoon, following an artillery preparation, the attack was renewed, but did not get beyond the edge of the Bois de Dommartin.

The center of the division, advancing along the southeast side of the lake, took Houtoumont and the railroad beyond it, advancing approximately two kilometers in the day. During the night troops were concentrated here with a view to penetrating the enemy's position next morning. They had gained another kilometer and were up the wire in front of the Bois de Bonsel when, at 11 o'clock, fighting was suspended. West of the lake the left of the 28th, co-operating with the attack of the 33rd Division, pushed forward through the Bois de Haudrouvilles Bas and the Bois de Haravillers and took the farm of Houtou Journaux, so that on the morning of the 11th the whole of Lachausse Lake was in the possession of the Americans.

33rd's Push in Woivre Plain

As had been intended in the original army plans, the 33rd Division, of the Seventh French Corps, moving toward Conflans over the level farming lands of the Woivre plain on the marching flank of the Second Army's attack, made the most determined effort and, in consequence, underwent the most severe fighting. Already, on November 5, two companies of the 131st Infantry, on the right, raided and cleared the Bois les Hautes Epines and the Bois de Warville, and at 9 o'clock on the morning of the 10th this regiment, from the positions thus gained, attacked northeast toward the larger Bois d'Herville. They penetrated to its center, but were obliged to drop back to its southwestern edge by the resistance encountered. The following morning the 131st made an attack on Bit-

genville from St. Hilaire, southwest of it. This attack was held up by machine gun fire, and preparations were under way to take Bitgenville and also Jonville, further to the southeast, at 11 o'clock.

Meantime, on the left, the 130th Infantry had, on the morning of the 10th, attacked and carried all the German trenches from Saulx-en-Woivre northeast to Marcheville and had taken the latter village. Two determined German counter-attacks, however, forced them out of Marcheville to its southern edge, from which position two subsequent counter-attacks were repulsed. Before daylight next morning the 129th Infantry relieved the 130th on this part of the line.

Without artillery preparation the 3rd Battalion of the 129th and the 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 130th were instituting an attack in co-operation with the one on Bitgenville, while the 1st Battalion of the 130th was attacking toward Pintheville, northeast of Fresnes, at 11 o'clock. All of the points attacked and taken by the 33rd Division were in the enemy's main line of resistance and in capturing them, more than 150 prisoners were also secured.

At the hour of the armistice the advance of the Second American Army had already taken, since the previous morning, about 58 square kilometers of territory. Although the several partial attacks at that time under way had developed the fact that the enemy was holding along this front with all the strength he could command, the attacks were, nevertheless, progressing favorably. As none of even the front line American divisions were yet fully engaged and as five more divisions were already assembled or rapidly arriving in the rear areas ready to strengthen and extend the general attack along the army front, a few more days would have sufficed to shatter the enemy's limited powers of resistance. In the fighting, so far as it was carried, the Second Army suffered 1,380 casualties, of whom 614 were lost by the 33rd Division, the remainder being distributed among the 7th, 28th and 92nd Divisions, while seven officers and 178 enlisted men were captured from the enemy.

French Co-operation on Left

While the Second American Army was developing a major offensive, the Second Colonial Corps, on its left, did not by any means remain idle, but co-operated vigorously with the forward movements of the 56th and 33rd U.S. Divisions on its flanks. Between the 9th and the 11th of November, the 10th Colonial Division, joining the 56th U.S. near Bezonville and extending thence southward about seven kilometers to Elx, against vigorous opposition pushed forward from its front lines at the eastern base of the Meuse plateau an average distance of

about three kilometers, into the Woivre plain and took possession of the village of Dieppe.

The 81st U.S. Division, under command of Maj. Gen. Chas. J. Bailey, held the sector, about 13 kilometers in length, from Elx to Fresnes. With the 32nd Infantry on the left flank and the 324th on the right flank, it began operations at 8 o'clock on the morning of the 9th by advancing on both flanks after an artillery preparation, the center remaining passive. During that day the 322nd took the heavily fortified village of Moranville, while the 324th broke through the German first and second trench lines and occupied the woodlands of Les Claire Chenes and Noire Haie. Both attacks were renewed on the morning of the 10th, and at 5 a.m. the 322nd Infantry took Grimoucourt, at 11 reaching Abaucourt, on the main road and railroad between Verdun and Etain, where it was in close liaison with the 10th Colonial Division.

At 1 p.m. it began its advance on the enemy's main line of resistance, 1,300 meters east of Grimoucourt. That night the 322nd Infantry was relieved by the 221st, and the 2nd Battalion of the 324th was relieved by the 1st Battalion of the 323rd, releasing the rest of the 324th for other uses. The 321st, on the morning of the 11th, drove against the two woodlands, the Grand and Petit Cognon, south of Abaucourt and Houtoucourt. It captured them and then, moving through the gap between them, the 1st Battalion went against Houtoucourt, a virtual fortress encircled by trenches and wire. It was in the midst of this attack when hostilities ceased at 11.

What One Outfit Did

On the other flank the 323rd Infantry and the co-operating battalions of the 324th were similarly in action at the same hour, having advanced in spite of severe losses from machine guns and gas and high explosive shell until the 3rd Battalion of the 324th was in the Bois de Manheulles. During its two and one-half days of battle the 321st Division, which had been in France less than three months and had never before engaged in an offensive, had advanced from two to five and one-half kilometers on its whole long front, and released the villages of Manheulles, Blanzec, Moranville, Grimoucourt and Abaucourt, taken nearly 100 prisoners and lost 46 officers and 936 enlisted men in casualties. Indeed, in their brief operations the 81st and the 7th and 92nd Divisions of the Second Army, which were practically as new to offensive employment, vied with the more experienced divisions in courage and tenacity and proved that they could have borne their full share of any work that might have been laid upon them had the war continued.

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